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VOL. 10 NO. 7
APRIL 1980
ISSUE NO. 204

rail travel NEWS

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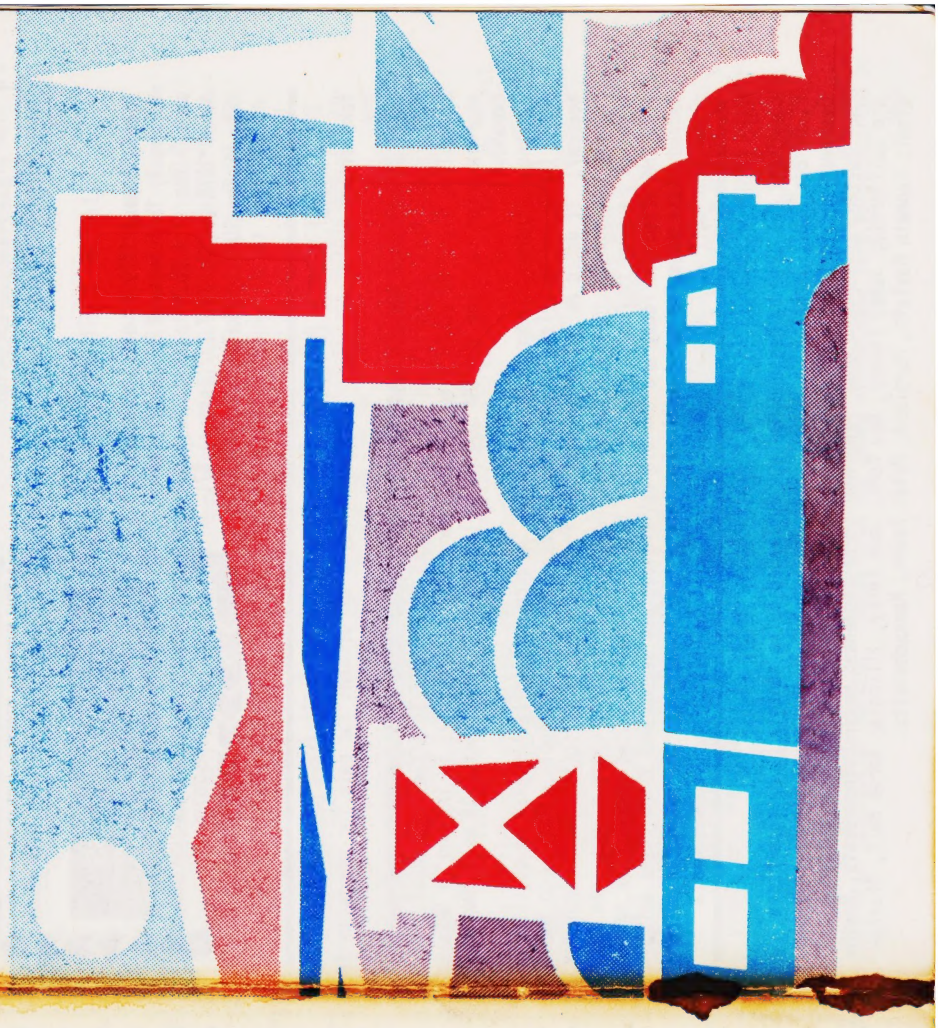

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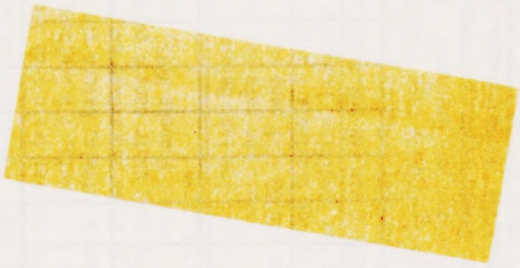

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BACK ISSUES

The full year 1979 is now available--Volume 9, 15 issues of RTN all in one parcel for just $5.50 postpd, no tax. Also: 1978 $5.50; 1977 (22 issues) $7. RTN, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

The Postal Service is seeking a 33 1/3% increase in first class postage rates, to take effect early next year. This would raise the present 15¢ rate for one ounce to 20¢.

If such an increase is approved, it would necessitate an increase in the yearly Rail Travel News subscription rate by at least $1.25 just to offset the added cost of mailing RTN. We would have to raise our subscription rates by the end of this year in order to allow for the lag in collecting additional income to meet the new expenses.

These outrageous demands by the Postal Service fuel inflation just as gasoline price increases do--rises in such basic needs have a large ripple effect upon the economy. It would be better to meet the Postal Service's deficits from general tax revenue because the ripple effect is minimized. First class users always take the brunt of revenue increases because they have the least organized lobby. The mailers with the effective lobby are the big mailers who use second and third class mail. Second class magazine rates will rise only a tiny amount, and the rates for third class junk mail will actually DECREASE! We will be writing our Congressman.

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LETTERS

While America may be diggin' in, turning 7-Up, and getting into training, it is clear to this traveler that Amtrak has virtually abandoned any efforts to provide distinctiveness in their on-board services. This conclusion has been reached after approximately five years' travel throughout the Amtrak system. It appears that "management" throws together consists haphazardly, maintains shoddy food and lounge services, schedules and routes trains in a hit-or-miss fashion, disregards esthetics of interior design, and maintains equipment poorly.

This is not to say that I have not had enjoyable experiences on Amtrak. However, when such do occur, or when I read about others' enjoyable journeys, phrases such as "I was pleasantly surprised when..." or "As luck would have it..." are usually to be found. Pleasureable experiences on Amtrak seem to result unexpectedly, typically the result of the appearance of unique equipment, the attentiveness of an occasional crew member, or the meeting of interesting passengers.

The following are a few examples, chosen at random, of instances which have led me to the above conclusions. The dates are excluded, as this is not a letter to the ICC.

*Train 88, already two hours late, sits in the Jersey Meadows, five minutes from Penn Station, an additional three hours with disabled GG-1's. Minimal attempts are made by dispatchers and crew to assist the train with any urgency. On-board crew sits smoking in the closed dining car, ignoring passengers.

*Some economy slumbercoaches ride beautifully, whereas others, as well as "first class" sleepers, are rolling rattletraps.

*Amfleeted long-haul trains such as the MONTREALER operate with cramped coach seats that do not recline adequately, and with no dining car. Food and lounge service is an abomination on these trains.

*A waiter in the dining car of the LAKE SHORE provided service equivalent to that in a fine restaurant. Something is wrong when a passenger becomes suspicious of such things rather than accustomed to them.

*Mice were observed in the slumbercoach of the SILVER METEOR.

*A fistfight broke out in the diner of the EMPIRE BUILDER between a waiter and a passenger. Regardless of who was at fault, are waiters instructed to taunt passengers as they frequently appear to do?

*On the few remaining trains with domes, these are opaque, resulting in more frustration than were there no domes to begin with.

On Apr 7 the Public Broadcasting Service presented a program entitled "The Superliners: Twilight of an Era." Aside from the irony of the same term being applied to

ON THE COVER

A portion (about 70%) of a drawing from a current SAN JOAQUIN newspaper ad running in California. The original is in monochrome--RTN added the color. The ad is headed "Bay Area to the Big Valley by Amtrak", and includes schedules and fares and a small map of the route. Here's a partial quote of the text: "No reservations needed. No long lines. No white knuckles on take-off. And gas pump prices are somebody else's worry!" The ad notes that longer trips are "1/3 the price of driving." All in all, a very good and informative ad. The pictorial elements represent the Central Valley at the left and San Francisco (including the TransAmerica Pyramid highrise) on the right. Cut out of our picture are representations of a sailboat and a bridge on the far right.

both the great passenger ships and Amtrak's newest equipment (appropriate for the former, banal for the latter), the program illustrated the stylishness with which Cunard Lines maintains remaining trans-Atlantic passenger travel. Amtrak's operations by comparison are in a sorry state indeed.

Jerome H. Kaplan
New York City, New York

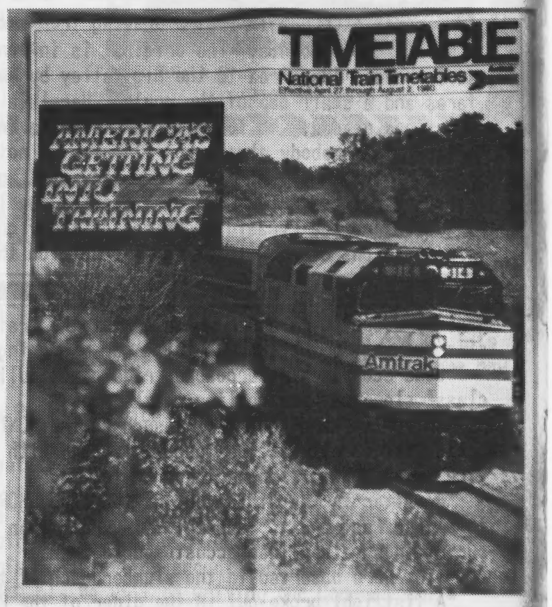
Bob Johnston's comparison (RTN #202) of a sample Amtrak fare vs. TWA was grossly unfair in that a first class bedroom rate at 1½ minimum fares was directly contrasted with the lowest available aircoach fare.

If TWA offered a private room capable of sleeping two adults in full-size beds with private lavatory facilities, I would bet that you couldn't ride it for $1000 even for four hours. If you're going to compare fares, just take coach vs. coach or first class vs. first class, not the Hilton vs. the YMCA!

Robert A. Brown
Newbury, Massachusetts

★ APRIL SCHEDULE CHANGES BRING NEW PHILADELPHIA-PITTSBURGH TRAIN

Amtrak issued a new system timetable for the Apr 27 (Daylight Saving Time) schedule changes and at the same time inaugurated a new train, the PENNSYLVANIAN, between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh PA. The new train didn't get listed in the timetable, however, because plans for its startup weren't completed by the time the timetables went to press.



The new train is a joint Amtrak-state 403-B operation. Intermediate stops on the route are Paoli, Lancaster, Harrisburg, Lewistown, Huntingdon, Tyrone, Altoona, Johnstown, Latrobe and Greensburg. All of these stops are also served by the BROADWAY LIMITED, except for Tyrone and Latrobe, which lost service when the NATIONAL LIMITED was discontinued last fall. The state of Pennsylvania will pay an estimated $580,000 in subsidy for the first year of operation. The state has also applied for new service on other routes. Amtrak said that under consideration is proposed weekend service between Scranton PA and Hoboken NJ, and additional service Altoona-Pittsburgh.

The fare for the full distance is set at $29; this is a special one-way coach fare good thru Jun 30. The special fares offer discounts of up to 40%, Amtrak said. The train carries Amcoaches and a food service car.

The westbound train (no. 47) leaves Philadelphia's 30th St. Station daily at 9am, reaching Harrisburg at 10:50 and Pittsburgh at 4:25pm. Eastbound, train 46 departs Pittsburgh at 12:45pm, arriving in Harrisburg at 6:20pm and Philadelphia at 8:15pm.

The Apr 27-Aug 2 national timetable, pictured above, is one of Amtrak's most handsome to date, featuring a full-color cover that pictures a Superliner train such as

the EMPIRE BUILDER, in rural scenery. While the color cover is of coated stock, the inside pages are the normal newsprint, printed in brown and green. Most of the major timetable changes have already been published in earlier issues of RTN. The BROADWAY LIMITED began an operational change on Apr 27--that of combining the NY and Washington sections in Philadelphia instead of Harrisburg. At the same time, the train began running 31mins faster between Chicago and Washington but 13mins slower between Chicago and New York. North Philadelphia has been eliminated as a stop. The LAKE SHORE LIMITED has been speeded up, running eastbound 20mins faster to NY and 35mins faster to Boston. Westbound, it runs 30mins faster from NY and 35mins faster from Boston. As of Apr 27, Framingham was changed from a flagstop to a regular stop, and Pittsfield likewise on a one-year experimental basis.

The Northeast Corridor work will cause slowdowns; the CRESCENT southbound gets 30 mins added between NY and its Washington departure. It now reaches New Orleans at 7:45pm. Northbound, it leaves New Orleans at 7:30am instead of 6:45am, for a 30hr, 50min trip to New York instead of the previous 29hrs, 59mins--a slowdown of 51mins. Other trains running in the Corridor get slowdowns also; this includes the Florida trains (minor amounts). The northbound COLONIAL leaves Richmond VA an hour earlier, at 8:35am, and reaches Boston 13mins earlier, at 8:40pm. The northbound SILVER METEOR leaves Miami at 8:40am instead of 9:25 and reaches New York at 10:50am instead of 11:38. The plan to run the Washington section of the BROADWAY LIMITED on the rear of trains 142-171 has been dropped; it runs separately Washington-Philadelphia.

Other Amtrak changes are as reported in issue 201, page 18.

Amtrak issued a revised second edition of the earlier Feb 3 system timetable, and it was dated Mar 16, printed in an edition of 100,000. (The Feb 3 timetable had a printing of 400,000, and the present timetable has 500,000.)

★ ADIRONDACK TRAIN IS THREATENED

Amtrak's New York-Montreal day train, the ADIRONDACK, is threatened with possible termination because of a funding dispute between Amtrak and New York State. Department of Transportation Commissioner William Hennessy has announced that his state will not provide funds to continue the train after June 1. Hennessy contends that "Amtrak must assume complete responsibility for the ADIRONDACK, since these trains out-perform criteria Congress approved for saving trains which the Secretary of Transportation marked for termination last year." New York's DOT has also asked for Amfleet equipment for the train in order to cut costs. Amtrak reportedly has not answered any requests for changes in funding or new equipment.

The New York National Association of Railroad Passengers in April announced its "strong opposition" to the possible discontinuance. Said NYNARP: "At a time when intercity travelers are encouraged to use public transportation, especially Amtrak trains, it is 'penny-wise and pound-foolish' to abandon an energy-saving train, providing a valuable service for an increasing number of consumers. The popularity of the ADIRONDACK has steadily grown. The train was initiated by New York State in 1973 as one of the nation's first '403-B' trains. The present funding arrangement calls for Amtrak and New York to share equally any losses the train incurs."

In 1979 the train exceeded Congressional criteria for which trains should continue to operate. NYNARP said the train is "too valuable to terminate simply over a dispute in funding procedures". The consumer group called upon Congress to adopt specific legislation to mandate that successful 403-B trains are taken into the basic Amtrak system. It said that Amtrak should provide the requested Amfleet equipment for the train. It also called the decision of Amtrak to start up the PENNSYLVANIAN with Amfleet equipment a "direct affront to NY DOT efforts". The group called upon rail supporters to write New York DOT (1220 Washington Avenue, State Campus, Albany NY 12232), Amtrak, U.S. Senators Moynihan and Javits, and Congressmen and New York state legislators in support of the train. NYNARP's address is PO Box 1345, Gloversville NY 12078.

FIRST RUN OF THE PENNSYLVANIAN
by Ken Maylath

Whatever else Amtrak trains 46 and 47 are, they provide a supplementary service between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh with a state 403-B subsidy. The service probably never would have been requested if the NATIONAL LIMITED had survived. But the schedule bears a close resemblance to the long-established Pennsy NY-Pittsburgh DUQUESNE. Indeed, that schedule survived during the early days of Amtrak when the NATIONAL and BROADWAY left New York and Washington on a combined basis. The new train stops at the same places in Pennsylvania served by the NATIONAL, including a couple of towns left without service after the NATIONAL ended.

Final details were completed too soon before the Apr 27 startup date to be listed in Amtrak's system timetable, so a separate timecard was printed showing the PENNSYLVANIAN and the now-electrified BROADWAY.

Equipment for the first eastbound run out of Pittsburgh ran west on Apr 26 as a sort of press run. Amtrak car 10000 carried an assortment of Amtrak people and state officials. The run received a fair amount of coverage on TV and in the newspapers.

I rode the first revenue run on Apr 27 by taking a quick roundtrip between Harrisburg and Altoona. The 2-hour layover is perfect for a walk around town, dinner, or checking out the full-fledged rail museum due to open soon near the station. (The Altoona station is still a trailer that's been used for years.) About 10 other rail supporters from the Harrisburg and Philadelphia areas were along for the same quick turn.

The first train 47 rolled into Harrisburg's ancient train shed with a few minutes to spare on a wet and gray Sunday morning. A single engine was trailed by two Amcoaches and an Amcafe. The number of regular passengers was on the light side, but that was to be expected on the first day of operation following limited pre-publicity.

The westbound run came off without a hitch. We were on time or slightly early at all stops. Generally, a couple of passengers got on and off at each place. The amount of business (excluding the rail supporters) was greater at Altoona.

Train 46 came in right on the money and discharged a large group of joyriders and a TV crew taping the action. Again, the consist was a single unit and three Amfleet cars. The return to Harrisburg was problem-free. The Amfleet cars rode well over one of Conrail's better-maintained divisions--much of it welded rail. Since most of the distance has three tracks, few delays can be expected in spite of heavy freight traffic. The locomotive was fueled by a tank truck during the stop in Harrisburg.

What does the future hold? For one thing, the state wants to establish an Altoona to Pittsburgh train by turning the equipment quickly in Pittsburgh, running back to Altoona in the early evening, then returning in the morning in time to protect the 12:45pm departure for Philadelphia. First, proper arrangements are needed for servicing and turning the train in Altoona. It's not possible to just let it sit in the station overnight.

One problem with the PENNSYLVANIAN is connections. The operation would be more viable if it were easier for passengers from New York to Philadelphia points. Amtrak guarantees only a NY-Philadelphia run westbound which leaves NY at 6:45am. That train runs Mon-Fri only. The MONTREALER is more convenient, but often can be late enough to miss the approximately 15-min connection at 30th Street. Eastbound, the MONTREALER is available as a connection every day. From Washington, connections are limited to the Mon-Fri 6am Metroliner. Passengers from Washington and Baltimore would be better advised to go to Harrisburg by bus--it's faster and cheaper. The connections in Harrisburg are conveniently scheduled--not to mention the fact that both bus companies operate out of the railroad station.

It would be hard to make significant changes in the schedules of trains 46 & 47 because they plug gaps in the Silverliner service between Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

Also, big time changes at Pittsburgh might interfere with plans for the Altoona-Pittsburgh turn.

With proper promotion, the train could do a decent enough business in these times of rising gasoline prices. It can take some pressure off the BROADWAY during heavy travel times. But it doesn't figure to be an L.A.-San Diego type success story either. The DUQUESNE in later years rated nothing more than a snack bar coach. However, there were other daytime schedules available between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Given the number of 403-B requests to Amtrak from various states, we'll probably be seeing similar inaugurals elsewhere during the next year.

RAIL CANADA

THE ABOVE PAINTING of a VIA TurboTrain appears in a recent VIA Rail Canada accommodations folder.

CANADIAN TRAIN ACCOMMODATIONS will be hard to get this summer unless potential passengers reserve early. Sleeping cars are reported booked more than six weeks in advance. Says Transport 2000, "How about some equipment for VIA? Isn't the demand proven?"

THE PAS-SASKATOON Railiner was ordered discontinued effective Apr 27 by the CTC. Transport 2000 will appeal the decision, as will some legislators and chambers of commerce.

AFTER LABOUR DAY, the VIA transcontinental trains will go on a 4 night-3 day schedule, according to a "solid rumour". These schedules would be similar to the old CN CONTINENTAL and CP DOMINION steam-era timetables. CN is believed unable to cope with the current "fast" schedules. Application for these changes is reported already in to the CTC.

PROVINCE OF ONTARIO has formed an Ontario Task Force on Provincial Rail Policy, chaired by Margaret Scrivener (MPP-St. David). The Task Force is studying the role of railways in the province (What are the current passenger and freight growth trends? Should more coordination develop between rail and other modes? How important are railways to growth of specific areas and industries? Can rail satisfy a greater proportion of the province's future transportation needs? etc.), the existing railway inventory, railway technology, energy issues, and financial, environmental and jurisdictional issues. An interim report will be produced within nine months and a final report by early 1981. The Task Force is asking for public involvement in the form of written briefs or letters, and they should be in the hands of the Task Force by June 1. The address is: Room 172, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1A2. Telephone (416) 965-0605.

THE "PRINCESS MARGUERITE" will not be running on the Seattle-Victoria route this year. The replacement for the venerable steamship was to have been the smaller and slower "Queen of Surrey". Now, however, it appears that a Boeing hydrofoil vessel will be used to make three daily roundtrips. The hydrofoil, which carries only 250 passengers, reportedly can make the one-way trip in under two hours. The 750

passengers thus accommodated is far less than the "Marguerite's" 1900 capacity per trip. The vessel is to be leased from Boeing with possible purchase later. B.C. premier Bill Bennett seems set on making the least desirable decision possible in this controversial matter. Runs are set to begin on May 15.

RED ARROW BUS company was to move its Edmonton operations into the VIA Rail station at the CN Tower on May 1.

URBAN-SUBURBAN TRANSIT

THE MARYLAND DOT announced Apr 22 that building a light rail system in the Baltimore-Annapolis corridor would not provide "an economical or efficient solution to the transportation problems in this area". The MDOT issued a report evaluating the earlier proposal of Delegate James Lighthizer which recommended a 42-mile light rail transit system connecting Baltimore, Annapolis, Odenton and the Baltimore-Washington International Airport. Lighthizer had also proposed a 19-mile line along U.S. 50 between Annapolis and the New Carrollton Metro station. MDOT did not discuss the latter, but it did state opposition to the former proposal, preferring its own recommended Interstate 97 highway. Said MDOT, "MDOT is currently studying a system of new buses, park-and-ride lots, and new highway lanes exclusively for buses, carpools and vanpools. The department supports a balanced transportation program for Anne Arundel County, including mass transit. At this time, ...an express bus system combined with related highway improvements would be the most cost-efficient way to serve corridor travel needs. Over time, better bus service will increase transit use so that future fixed rail transit may become feasible." Lighthizer's recently published proposal was entitled "The Arundel Connection". The MDOT concluded that the rail system would cost more than double the estimated $434 million, and that inflation by startup time could drive the cost as high as $1.3 billion. The department said that the region's proposed 9-mile rail line in the median of state highway 3 would be more cost-effective than the "Arundel Connection".

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY Board has voted to eliminate off-peak fares on the Long Island Rail Road. The off-peak fares were 25% less than regular fares and had been in effect since 1975. Also eliminated are the popular half-fare roundtrip "Sunday Special" fares begun in 1973. Finally, senior citizen and handicapped fares will be eliminated from the morning rush hours. The changes took effect on May 1.

R-46 SUBWAY CAR use will be reduced 47% by New York's MTA following a Federal draft report in March that noted potential safety problems in the Pullman-Standard-built cars. The cutback was to have been made sooner, but the New York transit strike intervened. While a Federal investigation is made into the car problem, the decision to limit mileage on the cars in order to preserve them longer was the best interim solution that could be arrived at.

THE FORMER ICG Central Station site in Chicago south of the Loop is being sold to developers who plan an industrial mart and office-apartment complex on the 17 acres. The Illinois Commerce Commission has approved the sale by ICG.

CHICAGO AREA'S RTA has thrown support to a new rail transit line to the southeast Chicago suburbs instead of a proposed extension of Shaker Rapid Transit to I-271.

CITY OF SEOUL in South Korea earlier this year broke ground for the third section of its new subway now under construction. Later this year, an addition to the original 5.9-mile subway that was completed in 1974 will be finished.

PARIS IS MAKING contingency plans for future gasoline rationing conditions. The city's Metro officials estimate that subway ridership would rise 50% in such conditions. To cope with such an eventuality would require upgrading one Metro line per year at a cost of $75 million, lengthening platforms and using longer, faster trains. $50 million would be spent on 300 new buses to handle auto-less travelers.

THE RAILS OF APRIL

An Overview from 4000 Amtrak Miles

By Edgar and Emily Mead

We combined several missions in a 4000-mile Amtrak journey from April 9 to 19, 1980. From our New Hampshire home we took first the MONTREALER.

Neither prior reservation nor on-train request produced sleeper car openings on the MONTREALER, so we sat up all night between White River and Philadelphia. The conductor said the train was running pretty nearly fully booked at all times, and 18-car trains were not infrequent (so much for a train the DOT threatened to cancel). Sitting up all night proved surprisingly restful in the new long-distance style coach. Trainmen were most considerate and did not shout out the small intermediate stations. The MONTREALER ran one hour late Springfield-Philadelphia--pardonable but inconvenient to those meeting us in Philadelphia.

The BROADWAY LIMITED section from Washington uses the old Pennsylvania RR Mainline between Zoo Junction and Harrisburg, and owing to "track work" above Washington was 1½ hours late for the New York connection at Harrisburg. This was just the second run of this consist of newly-rebuilt equipment for the BROADWAY--it was beautifully finished in nice colors. The train was using a cafeteria snack car, which we found ideal from the viewpoint of obtaining drinks and light supper with minimal delay. We obtained a bedroom in which the wash basin fell off. We tried the coach seats up ahead, and found them very comfortable indeed. The track between Harrisburg and Pittsburgh was bad beyond belief. Every rail joint was like a New England pothole. The cars yawed and bounced. It made for an unreasonably uncomfortable night and much reflection over the role of the U.S. Government in transportation.

AMERICA'S GETTING INTO TRAINING

Chicago Union Station, always a fine operation to our way of thinking, was as busy as during wartime--yet signs were good. Floors were clean. There was a good selection of shops. Too bad Chicago cannot have a Light Rail surface system feeding Union and Northwestern stations from points in and around the Loop. (Maybe Chicago needs a new transit Titan.) Union Station uses airline-type closed-circuit TV train announcing, but we like the Italian-made unit in Philadelphia's 30th Street Station.

In Chicago we boarded the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. It's unfortunate that equipment is still hand-me-down from other railroads. The Lexan was badly scratched and needs replacement with the new Marlan. Accommodations and service were certainly very acceptable. However, we got the distinct impression that the train was being run mostly for the convenience of the train crew. Not only were crews exchanged, but perhaps a third of passengers were on some form of pass, so that railroad employees were probably in the majority over civilian passengers.

We took an Avis rental car from Santa Fe to Denver. Altho Mead's Rules of Travel forbid prior reservations, we did order an Avis car to meet us at Lamy, New Mexico. What finally showed up 1½ hours late was a Pontiac Firebird, perfect for two dudes in zoot suits, but hardly suitable for three adults and five large pieces of luggage. It is strange that Avis and its licensees cannot get together and use their

clout for force Detroit into a more acceptable rental vehicle, maybe a cross between a Checker Marathon and a Volvo.

Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad is the excursion line between Antonito, Colorado and Chama, New Mexico, penetrating some of the finest and most spectacular Rocky Mountain wilderness. We were told that 1980 traffic prospects are excellent--for attractive vacation activities, Americans will find the gasoline. Another railroad adventure in the making is the Georgetown Loop Railroad, which still needs to replace the high bridge portion of the famous loop.

Denver has begun converting 16th Street in downtown into a car-free mall. This is certainly the litmus test of a city getting fed up with smog and traffic congestion. After coming to their senses about spacy monorail systems, officials now seem united that a Light Rail network would be most effective. Back in the 1930's, Denver Tramway occasionally used its trolley cars in combination with trailers. After an American Legion parade which packed Denver with tens of thousands of visitors, the streets were emptied in minutes by the trolley-and-trailer combinations--an idea which should be reborn.

We took the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR between Denver and Chicago. Like the SOUTHWEST LIMITED, new cars are not yet available. Windows were nearly opaque, and the train was not even hauled thru the Denver train washer as in the olden days. The train was moderately well-filled. Track was quite rough between Denver and the Nebraska border. Most sidings were filled with long freight trains, with numerous piggyback vans in evidence. Dining service was good, even tho certain menu items were not available. The Colorado Highway Department, believe it or not, has been studying the idea of a 1000-mile automobile piggyback and train for passengers between Galesburg IL and Denver, just in case gasoline problems cut into the tourist seasons.

The LAKE SHORE LIMITED between Chicago and Springfield, Mass. proved to be the pleasant surprise of the trip. Cars were clean. Everything worked. Dining service was fine. Track was reasonably good. It was the only stage of the entire journey when the porter met us, gave us his name (which was Ron), and actually asked if we would like complimentary coffee, a service we thought had been abolished. The train was jammed. We got the very last sleeper accommodation. The ride over the Berkshires from Albany to Springfield was as scenic as any. There were no connections at Springfield, so we waited around for a Vermont Transit bus back to White River.

No 4000-mile journey would be complete without drawing a few conclusions:

1. Track is certainly at the base of passenger train travel in more ways than one. If all the track on our trip had been as smooth as the Santa Fe between Chicago and Lamy, I am sure train riding would become as popular as it would be comfortable.

2. On this trip we were pleased to find practically no equipment failures of any kind.

3. It is not hard to predict that if trains are running full in April, there is going to be anguish and anger when summer vacationers find they can't get accommodations.

4. The car shortage is such that foreign equipment must be considered, as from Europe or even Brazil.

5. Employee morale and courtesy was the best we have seen--not superior, but acceptable. About like dealing with the Postal Service.

6. We came to the conclusion that Western roads have a real problem with their single-track lines and heavy-density freight, and that conflict is inevitable.

7. There should be a day train on the MONTREALER route between Vermont, New Hampshire and the New York area, and also fast service between Boston and Portland, Maine--and eventually, a Boston-Montreal fast train.

8. It is time the U.S. began to think about coordination of airline, bus and train service. Each mode has distinct advantages on certain routes. Interconnections and interline tickets should be encouraged.

TUNNELING THRU THE TEHACHAPIS?

THE CALTRANS PLAN FOR RAIL TRAVEL IMPROVEMENTS IN CALIFORNIA, PRESENTED AS TESTIMONY BEFORE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS EARLIER THIS YEAR

The 500-mile corridor stretching from San Diego to Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area includes about 20 million people, and is one of the most heavily traveled and fastest growing corridors in the country. Since 1960 population has increased in the California corridor at a rate almost four times as great as the Northeast Corridor. Recent estimates indicate this trend is expected to continue thru the year 2000.

The 500-mile length of the California corridor is not prohibitive and the fact that it has three segments (San Diego-Los Angeles; Los Angeles to San Francisco Bay Area; and S.F. Bay Area to Sacramento) is not unusual. Japan's Tokyo-Hokata Bullet train route is 730 miles long; the Northeast Corridor is approximately 500 miles. The Northeast Corridor also has several segments which carry heavy traffic and the importance of a continuous route linking the various segments has been well-established. For example, the high ridership on the NY-Philadelphia segment is partially due to the continuous service along the entire Northeast Corridor.

The first stage in the development of the California corridor is the most important, but is the least expensive. The energy picture is changing so rapidly that, while we do emphatically support the proposals for long-range capital improvement programs, we must also implore Congress to consider what actions can be taken to get more trains running in the California corridor within the next year or two.

The first stage of the program should start immediately and be implemented within a three-year period to include the following elements:

*Major capital improvements on the San Diego-Los Angeles segment to reduce travel time 27 minutes at a cost of $70 million, provide safety and operational improvements at a cost of $35 million, and improve stations at a cost of $39 million.

*Station improvements in the remaining two segments of the California corridor at a cost of approximately $20 million.

*Major capital improvements on the San Francisco Bay Area-Sacramento segment to reduce travel time 15 minutes at a cost of $36 million.

*Increased train frequencies in the entire corridor to the following levels:

--8 trains daily each way between Los Angeles and San Diego.
--4 trains daily each way between Los Angeles and San Francisco Bay Area.
--5 trains daily each way between San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento.

The second stage of the program should be implemented by 1990 and include:

*Major capital improvements on the remainder of the corridor to provide improved track standards allowing 110mph top speed on straight track outside of urbanized areas at a cost of about $1 billion. More specifically, this stage should include a project to tunnel under the mountains between Bakersfield and Los Angeles to provide for high-speed rail operation between these two cities.

*Further increases in train frequencies in segments of the corridor consistent with increasing demand.

Stage three would complete the development of the corridor sometime after 1990 thru major new high-speed track alignments throughout the corridor and possible electrification of the San Diego-Los Angeles segment.

In summary, we urge a federal commitment for $200 million for the stage one improvements and $1 billion for the stage two improvements. The level of funding for stage three should be comparable to the funds provided for the Northeast Corridor consistent with increasing demand.

PASSENGER TRAINS ARE *NOT* THE ANSWER

THIS ARTICLE IS REPRINTED FROM THE APRIL 1980 ISSUE OF SOUTHERN PACIFIC BULLETIN. IT DOES NOT REPRESENT THE OPINION OF RTN, BUT IS PRESENTED IN ORDER THAT READERS MAY HAVE ACCESS TO DISSENTING OPINIONS.

You are probably already aware that freight trains are extremely fuel-efficient. A freight train, for instance, can move three or four times as much freight per gallon of fuel as a long-haul truck over a comparable route.

But are trains also fuel-efficient for passengers? The answer is *no,* except under the most ideal circumstances which rarely if ever exist.

Numerous government and independent studies have shown that buses are up to three times more energy-efficient than passenger trains. In fact, even the newer-model automobiles that get 25 or more miles per gallon, with four passengers, can be more fuel-efficient than passenger trains.

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Trains are fuel-efficient for freight, but not for passengers, because of a fundamental difference in the ratio between the weight of the train and the two very different types of "payloads." A rail freight car can carry three or more times its own weight in freight, but the weight of a passenger car greatly exceeds the weight of the passengers being carried.

The type of passenger trains being proposed for service on our Eugene-Portland line, for example, would have to pull 1.3 tons of steel for every passenger, even if the cars were filled to capacity. A modern bus, by comparison, weighs less than one-third of a ton per passenger and therefore gets much better fuel mileage.

Are Amtrak trains fuel-efficient? Some claims have been made for them, but only if they are powered by new model locomotive units hauling near-capacity loads of passengers in new "Amfleet" coaches at 50 miles an hour. It is, of course, unreasonable to assume that any intercity bus, train or plane would operate at 100 percent of capacity from origin to destination. Typically, Amtrak trains operate with far less than capacity loads and at about one-third of the fuel efficiency of intercity buses.

Passenger trains are also extremely costly to operate compared to buses; they are not cost-effective in relation to the fares people are willing to pay. Studies by the State of Oregon of the proposed Eugene-Portland service indicate that $3.4 million in taxpayer subsidies would be required for an 18-month trial period.

A one-way fare of $13.50 is projected between Eugene and Portland, but the train would require an initial subsidy of $135 per rider per trip! This compares with an existing one-way Greyhound fare of $8.25 between the two cities—without any public subsidy.

SP analysts point out that in the first year taxpayers would have to pay $10 for every $1 paid by a passenger. Even assuming patronage greatly improved after the trains were fully established, taxpayers would have to pay $1.55 additional for every $1 paid in fares.

Adding more passenger trains to our single-track railroad would not only be inefficient from fuel and cost standpoints, but would almost certainly have a detrimental effect on our service to shippers.

Why should this be so? Weren't we handling both freight and passenger trains on the same single-track line 40 years ago during the heyday of passenger service?

The answer, of course, is that railroading has changed dramatically since those days of shorter, slower, steam-powered trains.

Today, we are handling more freight—more, in fact, each working day than we did at the height of World War II. And we are hauling it in much longer, heavier, faster trains. We have to do this to meet the competition from long-haul truckers who have the subsidized use of a high-speed, interstate freeway system that didn't even exist 40 years ago.

A few decades ago, it was the practice to place sidings for short trains at frequent intervals along our lines. Today, with longer trains and increasing congestion, it is much more difficult to find sites for sidings long enough to accommodate our mile-long freight trains. Often they must be located at substantial distances from one another, and we must rely on technological innovations like CTC to coordinate train movements in both directions. Obviously, today's railroad is just not the same railroad that some people remember.

The fact is that adding any of the proposed passenger trains—which would have to be given priority over freight trains—to our freight-carrying railroad would mean sidetracking freights and delaying freight transit time in important corridors—all with a very serious ripple effect on freight operations systemwide.

Chairman B. F. Biaggini has pointed out that substantial train delays can harm service to shippers and bring about "a massive diversion of freight to the highways, which would waste fuel."

A recent SP study shows that if such delays were to cause traffic to be diverted from a single 6,000-ton freight train to highway carriers, the resulting *increase* in fuel consumption could total 16,000 gallons a day or 6 million gallons a year.

It would indeed be ironic if more of the railroad's limited capacity were utilized for passenger trains, forcing freight off the railroad on to trucks, for then both passengers and freight would be wasting fuel.

It's understandable that rail passenger fans and local lawmakers are tempted by the federal grants that are available to finance the major share of these passenger train experiments. All too often they have the notion that "someone else will get the money if we don't."

But we should consider that (1) it is still, after all, *everyone's* tax money that is being spent, and (2) that there could be *added* tax burdens to face when "revenue sharing" runs out and rail passenger service is still running deeply in the red. Passenger train advocates then will surely be raising a *new* cry that "we must keep on protecting this heavy investment as a social service, no matter what the cost."

Southern Pacific is not against needed passenger service in a time when America must preserve energy. But it believes that this service, on the routes

being considered, can best be provided at less cost to the taxpayer, with more flexibility and with much greater fuel efficiency by comfortable, attractive and more frequent buses on the highways that run right alongside our track. □

REMOTE CONTROL

by Robert W. Rynerson

It was a case of remote-control reporting. In mid-April, newspaper readers across English-speaking North America were presented with a syndicated article describing the "best" and "worst" of Amtrak long-distance trains. At least one of the trains was ripped apart in the article on the basis of second-hand reports relayed by Amtrak officials.

David Young of the Chicago Tribune wrote the piece, and reported that he enjoyed his ride on the Superliner-equipped EMPIRE BUILDER. Along with the BUILDER article was a sidebar list of his five other best trains: the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, SOUTHWEST LIMITED, LAKE SHORE LIMITED, Metroliners, and the DESERT WIND.

(David Young's original article appeared as the lead, front-page article in the Chicago Tribune's travel section on Sunday, Mar 30. It was entitled "Amtrak '80: New Superliner, good and bad trains". David Young is transportation editor of the frequently anti-passenger train Chicago Tribune.)

"Amtrak operates some real duds," warned Young to prospective travelers, and listed six of them: the PANAMA LIMITED, BROADWAY LIMITED, CARDINAL, INTER-AMERICAN, CRESCENT and PIONEER. Of the PIONEER, he said that it "was put into service a few years ago as a political train to mollify Western U.S. Congressmen." The appearance of that line in an article intended to advise prospective travelers caught my eye, since most vacationers are not concerned with whether the airport at which they land, or the lake in which they swim was put in for political purposes. In a sense, the entire Amtrak system is political. And how could the twins, the DESERT WIND and PIONEER, rate so differently?

I called David Young to chat with him about his article, to seek the facts upon which he based his opinions. As I tracked him thru the long-distance maze ("will you hold please?" "no, but you might call....") I rummaged thru my imagination. What sort of person writes about travel? A Paul Theroux, eyeing his fellow passengers thru the smoke and dust, quietly noting their humanity? Or would I be connected with a Richard Halliburton--the all-American boy on the Royal Road to Romance? The article did not read like one by Rogers E. M. Whitaker.

When the phone on David Young's desk finally rang, I found myself speaking to a telephonic Lou Grant, without that television character's desire to get behind the "facts".

"The PIONEER goes from nowhere to nowhere," I was told. No, David Young had not traveled on all of the listed trains. When pressed on the reliability of his choices he said that they were based on comments by other people. Had Amtrak officials indirectly quoted in the article been the source of his views on the PIONEER? He would not say.

"I sat in Amtrak's marketing office and read computer reports some time ago," he said. They had sown the thought that the PIONEER would be a dud. In contrast, Amtrak marketing reports had indicated a great potential for the DESERT WIND route.

"Bulls--t!" Young exploded when I asked him about the Federal Railroad Administration's report which showed the PIONEER to be relatively efficient in its first fiscal year. The stuff he had been shown proved that there was no worthwhile market for the PIONEER, and the train was to be a "loser".

"Once you get on one Amfleet train, they're all the same," the Windy City journalist told me. "Amcrap is what they should be called." He was unaware of the PIONEER's primitive intermediate stations. He was unaware of the tariff discrimination practiced on thru travelers over the line in its startup year. He was unaware

of the reservation service's past efforts to route people around the PIONEER. He was able to list most of the airlines and bus companies operating east from Portland, and commented that subsidizing the train was a pretty costly thing to do just for the times when highways are closed by storms. He saw no contradiction in listing the DESERT WIND among the best and putting the PIONEER among the duds for prospective patrons.

The conversation did give me a few ideas. Having a wife, a child, a planning job and a mortgage has kept me at home a lot lately. I had held back on my writing under the mistaken impression that a writer should ride the trains and talk to the people who use them, run them, and have left either their heart or their lunch on them.

Away with all that! Instead I need travel no further than the public library on a Route 9 trolley coach to become a Knight-Ridder News Service travel writer. People sometimes criticized Lucius Beebe for looking at the places he saw thru a champagne glass in his private car. What a brave new world to be able to replace that with a stack of printed-out projections; to be able to look at the world thru the glass of a computer terminal!

LATEST AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

FEBRUARY 1980 FIGURES--SECOND COLUMN IS % INCREASE OVER 1979

Metroliners	130,696	2.6
NE Corr Conventional	372,888	.9
New Haven-Springfld	24,556	-6.0
NY-Philadelphia	200,115	20.3
Phila-Harrisburg	84,857	8.5
NY-Harrisburg	18,423	28.4
TOTAL NE CORRIDOR:	831,535	6.4
NY-Niagara Falls	55,118	1.8
Chicago-St. Louis	8,811	14.3
Chicago-Milwaukee	22,346	16.1
Chicago-Detroit	33,314	5.0
Chicago-Carbondale	13,370	7.5
Chicago-Quincy	7,319	5.3
L.A.-San Diego	73,748	19.2
Portland-Vancouver	9,179	3.4
Washington-Cincinnati	10,803	109.3
Wash.-Martinsburg	21,895	22.8
Oakland-Bakersfield	10,909	100.3
New York-Montreal	10,503	23.6
Chicago-Port Huron	6,533	17.2
Chicago-Dubuque	2,786	-3.6
Chicago-Duluth	7,989	5.1
Chicago-Valparaiso	16,459	.0
Chicago-Kansas City	9,356	36.5
TOTAL SHORT DIST.:	320,438	21.9

Washington-Montreal	29,166	5.7
New York-Florida	57,934	-8.3
Chicago-NY/Washington	13,757	25.5
Chicago-Cincinnati/DC	6,461	13.2
Chicago-Seattle	12,439	28.3
Chicago-S.F./L.A.*	38,958	104.3
Chicago-Los Angeles	18,012	33.4
Chicago-New Orleans	15,427	-2.4
Chicago-Texas	13,292	46.8
L.A.-New Orleans	6,245	6.8
L.A.-Seattle	34,052	13.0
Chicago-NY/Boston	19,597	49.6
Boston-Newport News	46,074	-3.9
New York-Savannah	27,583	-4.8
Seattle-Salt Lake	12,210	8.7
New York-New Orleans	14,708	21.7
TOTAL LONG DIST.:	365,915	13.0
Special trains	6,400	-3.3
SYSTEM TOTAL:	1,524,288	7.5

*SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR plus DESERT WIND

Amtrak released the above ridership figures on Apr 18 (see issue #202 for Jan figures). The 7.5% systemwide increase over Feb 1979 makes this February a very good month for Amtrak. And the increase is actually 10.8% if you subtract from the 1979 figures the 42,370 riders on the now-discontinued routes. Amtrak still includes in one figure the SF ZEPHYR and DESERT WIND riders, but in a footnote they were broken down: the DESERT WIND had 10,548 riders, and subtracting from the total gives for the SFZ a total of 28,410 riders. According to RTN's records, that makes a 49% increase from last year's total of 19,072.

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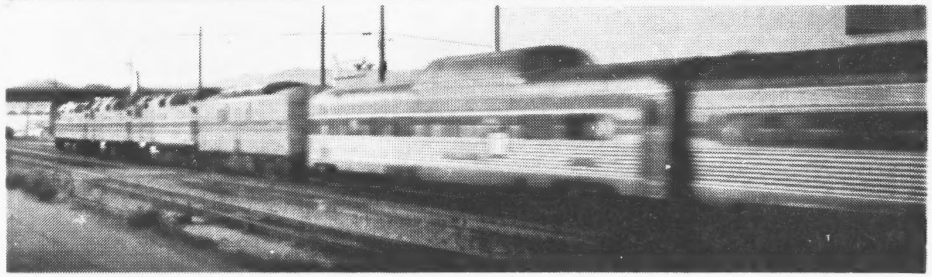

LAST ONE OF THE SEASON: The final run of Amtrak's RENO FUN TRAIN for the 1979-80 winter season heads for Reno the evening of Apr 18. We just barely managed to get this photo, after earlier tries in which darkness fell too quickly. The more lax schedule of this train makes it difficult to catch. On this occasion it left Oakland 15mins late, at 6:45pm, and is seen running at full speed thru Berkeley 5mins later. It was darker than the photo makes it appear, and we had to reduce shutter speed to 1/60 with our wide-angle lens open wide at f3.5 with Tri-X film, so the train motion was not completely stopped. Note that there are three F40 engines, a steam generator car, a dome observation car running backwards (probably 9310) and coaches. The consist is not turned at Reno, so for the daylight return trip on Sunday the observation is running in the proper place at the rear of the long train.

NARP DIRECTORS MEETING was held in Washington the weekend of Apr 19-20. NARP is reported optimistic about the outcome of legislation on the present Amtrak budget, and is likewise optimistic that some emerging-corridors funding will be approved by Congress. Observers guess that perhaps $30 million in beginning funding for the emerging corridors will emerge from Congress.....

FIVE-YEAR PLAN of Amtrak's is scheduled for completion by the end of May. Some advance notes on the plan follow: Amtrak makes the assumption that the following trains will be running in the near future: a second Kansas City-St. Louis train; Pittsburgh-Altoona service; two Portland-Eugene trains; the overnight Sacramento-Southern California "LARK"; two more SAN DIEGANS; a restored CHAMPION. No assumptions about the emerging corridors are made in the plan, but about 25 new 403-B services are assumed to be running within the next five years. The plan gives high priority to a second train on the BROADWAY LIMITED route and a second on the COAST STARLIGHT route (L.A.-Seattle; not Sacramento-L.A.).....

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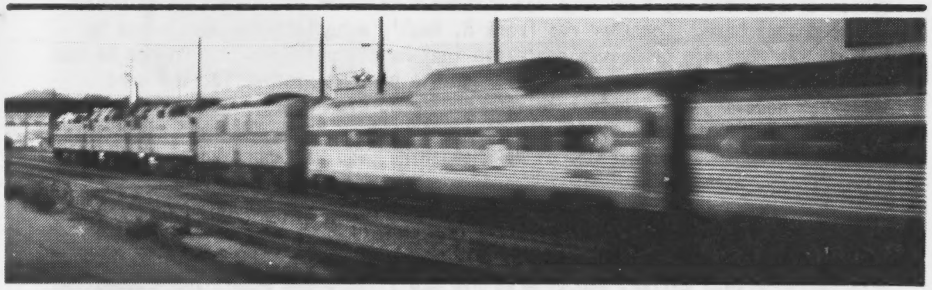

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AMTRAK'S CARDINAL HAD standing room only on a late-April departure from Washington, with about 350 aboard.....

ONE DETROIT TRAIN is reportedly to get Superliner cars soon.....

AMTRAK WILL REBUILD some Amfleet cars; many of the cars have been in service for a long time and are showing their age.....

VIA RAIL CANADA would like to convert its cars to electric power, as Amtrak is doing, reports a VIA representative.....

A CHICAGO-DETROIT train extended to Toledo as a midday operation reportedly has good prospects of startup within the next year.....

AMTRAK PASSENGER SERVICES has had some personnel shakeups. Ms. Rima Parkhurst replaces John Lombardi as VP-Passenger Services. Rex Holland is out of the onboard services position he held, with no replacement apparently yet named. Lombardi is in another department at Amtrak.....

THE NATIONAL LIMITED'S restoration is being promoted by several Midwestern Governors.....

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak has new appointments under consideration. James R. Mills has already been approved by a Senate committee for reappointment. The nomination of consumer rep Mary Head was withdrawn in favor of another woman whose name we do not have. Consumer rep Frank H. Neel's renomination was opposed by NARP, as the consumer group was concerned that he had not done some things he had previously promised NARP and reportedly because he kept misspelling the word "Amtrak". However, the Senate committee confirmed him anyway.....

A VICE PRESIDENT for NARP: for the first time, NARP has a VP--rail activist and RTN reader Samuel Stokes Jr. of New Hampshire, who was approved at the April NARP Directors meeting.....

HEP-CONVERTED CARS should have a 10-year life, Amtrak is estimating.....

A CELLO PLAYER of our acquaintance from Berkeley was recently traveling to Nebraska on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. In the dining car at lunch she got into conversation with a waiter, and offered him $20 if he could deduce her occupation from examining her fingertips. He could not, but the steward happened along, took one look at her fingers and replied, "You're a cello teacher." Over his refusals, she insisted that he take the money. Later at dinner, the teacher ordered a low-priced chicken entree, and when her dinner arrived it was an expensive steak, much to her delight.....

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THE SUNSET LIMITED is reportedly operating routinely late thru San Antonio--train 1 was late 1-3 hours without exception during April, and train 2 was also late most of the time. No further effort to get the train to run on time is obvious. End-point on-time performance is of course a different thing from timekeeping at intermediate points. Amtrak's latest on-time date, for Feb, show the SUNSET with a 65.4% on-time record, up from 15.4% in Jan, and better than the 50% record of Feb 1979. (These figures were released on Apr 28; beginning with the Feb figures, Amtrak is releasing them separately from the ridership data).....

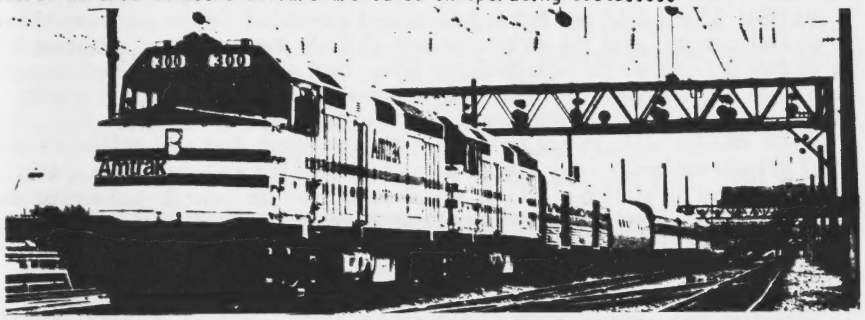
THE INTER-AMERICAN was the subject of some talk and activity recently to purchase a station site for it in San Antonio. The site was at or near the spot where the old I&GN had a small suburban station in Monte Vista, about 1½ miles northeast of the abandoned downtown depot. The San Antonio city council discussed the project, but now it has been dropped. The new site would have been in an inaccessible and hard-to-find location, and would have doubled time required to bus passengers from the SP depot. Train 21 is still said to operate six hours later starting in June...

PORTLAND-EUGENE OREGON additional Amtrak service, two roundtrips daily, is tentatively set to start on July 1. Amtrak said the date is about 80% sure at this time.....

AMTRAK'S BRUCE HEARD was married on May 3. Our congratulations to him and his wife.....

WILL STEAM LOCOMOTIVES ever return to American railroads in large numbers? A Congressional judicial review committee recently looked at the "1909 Ash Pan Act". That safety law requires U.S.-built steam locos to be equipped with ash pans that can be emptied without crawling under the engine. Both the FRA and the AAR wanted the law dropped as out of date. However, the committee let the law stand because the energy situation may someday force railroads to return to coal power.....

AMTRAK'S PADDED SCHEDULES: It has been said that 2 hours could be cut from the LAKE SHORE LIMITED schedule if Conrail permitted 79mph speeds. Even at the present 70mph permitted on most of the train's route west of Albany-Rensselaer, the padded schedule allows much time to be made up. As an example, the train that left New York on Apr 19 was delayed at Albany because of engine failure. When a new engine was added, the train left 2hrs, 5mins late. Yet it arrived Chicago 14mins early. The SUNSET LIMITED is yet another example of padding. The train that left New Orleans on Apr 18 had lost 1hr, 44mins by the time it reached San Antonio. But it reached Los Angeles 7mins early for a total of 1hr, 51mins faster than the scheduled time west of San Antonio. For each hour taken out of a long distance train schedule, several hundred thousand dollars are saved in operating costs.....



THE ABOVE PHOTO shows the first all-electric BROADWAY LIMITED leaving Washington on Mar 19. The photo is by Bill Kratville, from Amtrak News, the employee newsletter. Two F40 engines are pulling, with engine 300 in front. An Amdinette car is in the consist, now replaced with cafeteria cars.....

AMTRAK'S NEW AEM-7 locomotive is having its first revenue run on Friday, May 9 on Metroliner 108 which leaves Washington at 10am. The AEM-7 is the GM-built electric loco patterned after the Swedish ASEA design.....

KANSAS AND OKLAHOMA, it is hoped, will jointly apply before the Oct 1 deadline for a 403-B service from Newton to Oklahoma City. The train would carry thru cars (2 coaches and one sleeper) on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED east of Newton KS. The Missouri-Kansas Rail Passenger Coalition, which has been active in the effort to get this new train started, reported also that the Budd Company has been contacted about a demonstration of its SPV-2000 rail car in the Kansas City area. The Coalition also has been seeking a July 1 startup date for a second Kansas City-St. Louis train, mentioned on page 17. It is hoped that Lee's Summit MO will be a stop for any 403-B trains, for it would provide an estimated $500,000 more revenue yearly. Glowing reports are being received about the ANN RUTLEDGE's performance--better ridership and on-time performance than the former NATIONAL LIMITED.....

NORTHBOUND COAST STARLIGHT was involved in an accident with a trailer truck at the Interstate 5 overpass east of Woodland CA at milepost 86.7 at 11:30pm on May 1 (Amtrak's unheralded 9th anniversary). The northbound truck went thru the guard rail on the highway and landed on the tracks, where it was hit by the train. The STARLIGHT did not derail.....

THE SUNSET LIMITED was detoured over MoPac Lake Charles to New Orleans after an SP bridge at Berwick LA was damaged by a tug boat at 3:20am on Apr 27.....

LAST ISSUE'S REPORT that the Truck-Train plan had been killed by the FRA came as a surprise to Florida officials, but upon checking with the FRA they found it

was so. The FRA had not sent a formal letter to the Truk-Train promoters yet. The Ocala (FL) Star-Banner reported RTN's "scoop" and quoted a member of the promoter's staff as calling RTN's story "irresponsible journalism, because it's not true." But, added the newspaper, "FRA says, for them, it is true". RTN regrets having to report bad news along with the good, for we thought the Truk-Train idea was an excellent one.....

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COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE between Tucson and Phoenix AZ is economically unfeasible, according to an Arizona DOT report just completed. Meanwhile, another study, to be completed by the end of May, is examining the potential market for train service between Mesa and Phoenix.....

THE CHESSIE SYSTEM has asked the ICC to approve fare increases to take effect June 1 on its Lake Michigan auto ferries--up to 14% increases.....

BETTER PRINTING QUALITY of our last issue was noticed. Part way thru printing issue 203 we performed a routine maintenance task which surprisingly improved the printing quality enormously--in terms of more even distribution of ink on the page. The good results should still be evident this issue and continuously in the future...

ILLINOIS CENTRAL GULF and Amtrak have signed a contract for the railroad to rebuild 12 bilevel coaches, with the work to be done at ICG's Woodcrest Shop, Homewood IL. To be done are coaches 9611-20, 9600 and 9601. Cost will be $159,300 each except for four which will be rebuilt for push-pull cab control operation at $222,900 each. Diaphragms will be modified for compatibility with Amfleet cars.....

AMTRAK BAGGAGE STAFF at New York's Penn Station report that mail billings now run about $90,000 per month. All mail is moved in BMC's (big mail containers), wheeled boxes delivered to station platforms via elevator from the general post office above (Zip code 10001). Mail is handled regularly on trains 19-20 (Greensboro & Atlanta mail on a NY-New Orleans car), 87-88 (Jacksonville & St. Pete mail), and 40-41 (Chicago and western points). The NE Corridor handles NY-Washington mail. A Boston mail service began recently.....

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SAN DIEGAN LINE can carry more passenger trains without freight interference problems, Amtrak engineers said after studying the line, disputing Santa Fe Railway officials. They also concluded that building crossover tracks would be cheaper than a third track and would be adequate for easing future congestion. Santa Fe sticks with its conclusion that a seventh SAN DIEGAN would be a burden to freight, pointing out that this is the first time the railway has turned down an Amtrak train initiation request. The railway supports the Caltrans idea of a "Bullet Train" line in California, for it would free up its tracks completely.....

STATE OF MISSOURI has approved funding for a second passenger train between Kansas City and St. Louis. The Governor is expected to sign the funding bill.....

THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED derailment last Oct 2 just west of Lawrence KS was caused (according to the final report of the NTSB) by a missing speed limit sign, automatic train stop equipment malfunctioning, and the fact that the engineer had not been on the route in the last 12 months.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Eyebrows are being raised as people at Amtrak who have had considerable transportation experience leave the company while others whose careers have been mainly in government and bureaucratic environments fill the positions. ... This is demoralizing to loyal employees who have every reason to expect advancement thru the ranks. Amtrak management is insulating itself thicker and thicker with bureaucratic layers, making it easier to pass the buck and distribute responsibility in such a diffused manner that nobody is responsible..."

--M. D. Monaghan in The Clearance Card, newsletter of the Southwest Railroad Historical Society, April.

CARS & CONSISTS

*SOUTHWEST LIMITED, train 4, Kansas City Apr 27: engines 525, 505, 510; cars 1110, 1242, 1517, 9928, 9964, 9973, 9983, 9927, 2253 "Star Range", 2750 "Palm Arch", 2610 "Pacific Falls". Same, train 3, Apr 28 (note consist change due to transition cars in shops for HEP conversion): engines 521, 531, 508; cars (deadheads 5611, 8804, 8805), 1271, 1075, 1551, 2213 "Indian Flute", 2656 "Silver Crag", 2753 "Palm Leaf", 9935, 9980, 9974, 9954, 9951.

*SILVER METEOR, train 87/97, Newark Apr 21: engines Atk 4915, NJT 4878 (GG-1s); cars 1080, 1428, 2794 "Pinellas County", 2788 "Berkeley County", 2028 "Loch Tarbet", 8022, 4805, 4439, 4417, 4418, 3410, 4549, 4587, 4424, 4414, 8013, 2537 "Wren", 2856 "Seneca River".

*VALLEY FORGE, train 43, Newark Apr 21: MU's NJR 591, 540, 581, 592 (leased Jersey Arrow II's; married pairs in sequential numbers broken up due to last year's Maryland wreck.)

*GARDEN STATE, train 221, Newark Apr 21: MU's NJT 599, 598, 583, 582, 584, 585, 594, 595 (leased Jersey Arrow II's).

*Southern Rwy inspection train, East St. Louis Apr 16: engines 6147, 6143 (FP-7's); cars 2302 "Royal Arch", business cars 15, 18, track inspection car 21 (Research R-1, bus. car 9, inspection car 19 "Buena Vista".

*CRESCENT, train 19, Trenton Apr 19: engines 4908, 4934 (GG-1s); cars 1095, 1406, 5408, 5653, 5640, 5422, 5410, 5672, 5477, 3327, 8380, 2853 "Pacolet River", 2656 "Silver Crag", 5407, 6070, 5014, 6021, 3634 "Johns Hopkins".

*NORTH STAR, train 9, Cambridge MN Mar 29: engine 320; cars 2885, 20203 Amcafe, 21878, 21153, 4702.

RAIL FANTRIPS

One Rail Fantrips listing is free. To be sure of entry in time, send full info at least 4 weeks before event. Be sure to address letter as follows: RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

May 24: Steam excursion Kankakee-Sheldon IL RT, NKP 765 loco. 2 trips, 9:30 & 2. Open-window or A/C coaches, dome, snack-souvenir car, live band. $5-$15; both RT's $25. Golden Arrow, Box 6843, Chicago IL 60680. Kids $1 less; under 5 free.

May 24, 25: NRHS & Golden Spike RR Club excursion Salt Lake City-Provo RT. 12-car train with domes. $15, $25 for dome seat. Photo stops. Lv Salt Lake 10am, lv Provo 2pm. Trevor Stevens, 1004 W. 400 N., Orem UT 84057. (801) 226-8219.

May 31-Jun 1: Bangor & Aroostook excursion Bangor-Caribou ME via Presque Isle. BL-2 diesel & open-window coaches. $80 incl. double occupancy hotel space. Joint Trip Committee, PO Box 2468, So. Portland ME 04106.

Jun 15: Excursion to New Jersey Seacoast, Harrisburg PA-Bay Head, RT. Lv Hsbg 7am, arrive back 11:10pm. $40 RT fare. GG-1 4935 used to Rahway. Shuttle bus to beach. Lancaster Chap. NRHS, 342 West Fritz Ave., Quarryville PA 17566.

EXPRESS ADS

RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads: only $1.25 per square inch. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

BACK ISSUES: We have many requests for back issues of RTN. On page 2 we list recent year volumes of RTN. In addition, early 1980 issues (nos. 198 and up) are available at 65¢ each--no tax, no extra postage. If you wish issues earlier than 1977, please write for information; not all issues are in stock. RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

MORE EXPRESS ADS appear on the next page.

TRAINS!!! We know them!!! We ride them!!! We sell train tickets!!!
Call us for tickets and reservations for your next trip!!!
GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., Suite 900, San Francisco 94105.
(415) 398-2994. P.S. We sell air tickets, too.

DINING CAR DISHES, glasses, silver, cloth. Timetables, guides, stationery, rules, metal & Pullman items, annual reports from 30 railroads. Long stamped envelope brings list. J. McClellan, 1752 S. Wichita, Wichita, Kan. 67213. Will buy items.

TIMETABLE COLLECTING is one of America's fastest growing hobbies. Join the National Asscciation of Timetable Collectors. Just $12 dues brings the quarterly magazine "The Timetable Collector" and the monthly newsletter "The First Edition." Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Road, Holland PA 18966.

TRAIN THROUGH MEXICO lets you see Mexico's "back-country" the economical, relaxing, exciting way--by train and save 35%. Write R.T. Peck, Drawer 72, Whittier CA 90608.

NEW OPTIONAL ROUTES-Tickets between L.A. & Portland good via Salt Lake OR L.A. & Chicago via St Louis-no extra cost. Excursion ticket can leave San Francisco and return to L.A. or Seattle. RESERVE NOW for summer with the rail specialists. Let's Travel Tours, PO Box 2768, Riverside CA 92516. (714) 787-8350.

RAILROAD CLOTH EMBLEMS. Send $1.00 for two samples and list.
Joseph F. Lajoie, Box 3, 22 Stevens St., Methuen, Mass. 01844.

NOW READY: "Trolley Trails Through the West"--Volume 8--Southern California $4. Still available: Volumes 1-Yakima, 2-Seattle, 3-Portland, 4-Tacoma/Spokane, 5-Montana/Utah, 6-Western Canada $3 each; also Vol. 7-Northern California $4.00. Moneyback guarantee. Wilson Brothers Publications, Box 712rtn, Yakima WA 98907.

The Annual General Meeting of Transport 2000 Canada will take place at the Richelieu Inn, 430 Ouellette Ave., Windsor, Ontario on Sun., Oct 12 1980, 1:30pm.

TRAVEL ON CANADIAN TRAINS this year. They are clean, convenient and relatively economical. Your dollar buys $1.15 Canadian. To reserve call: Boston, 617-426-7974; Buffalo, 716-856-2940; Chicago, 312-346-6222; Detroit, 313-963-6037; New York, 212-586-6066.

TRANS-ACTION: Quarterly rail and transit journal, $10 per year. NARP members $5. Box 300, Term. A., Ottawa, Ont., Canada K1N 8V3.

35mm KODACHROME SLIDE DUPLICATES of Western steam, diesel and electric in the '40's. List/sample 50¢. Bob McVay, Box 625, King City CA 93930.

July 21-22 & 27-29: Special train from Alexandria VA in conjunction with NRHS Annual Convention in Toronto. Via Southern Rwy to Lynchburg VA, thence N&W via Columbus, Cleveland & Buffalo. Return via Lima, Muncie & Cincinnati. Steam and diesel power. First class psgrs have exclusive use of sleeping, dining & lounge cars. A/C reclining-seat chair cars & coffee shop car. Roundtrip or one-way. Intermediate stops. Write: Roanoke NRHS, Box 13222, Roanoke VA 24032, or call: (703) 366-5211 or 982-2030.

PHOEBE SNOW TIMETABLES: The last Delaware Lackawanna and Western R.R. System Timetables (Public issue). For sale now for $2.15 each. Excellent condition. Never used. Or for $10.00 I'll send you a 24-page booklet THE STORY OF PHOEBE SNOW a DL&W last System timetable & still more--an Erie-Lackawanna TT of my choice. All items new condition. Launcelot Erickson PO Box 3182 Omaha NE 68103.

YOU'RE INVITED--MEXICO RAILFAN FUN-TRAIN--January 15-29, 1981--5834 kilometers on NATIONAL & SURESTE RAILWAYS--Merida & narrow gauge train ride--TRIP OF A THOUSAND WONDERS (4.1% grades)--Private cars SOONERLAND & MISTLETOE--ride on locomotives. Trip starts in Oklahoma (join anywhere). For full details and map, write: Howard B. Thornton, Director, Midwest Travel Service, 2936R Bella Vista, Midwest City, OK, 73110. Phone 405-732-0566.

Rate The Trains

RTN is resuming its train rating surveys. You can submit your ratings now on regularly-scheduled North American passenger trains (not commuter) that you have personally ridden since Oct 28, 1979.

INSTRUCTIONS: Rate each train on each of the 11 categories (A-K) listed below: (A) Your overall impression of the train, taking everything into account; (B) Service from operating crew (conductor, etc.); (C) Dining or snack crew service; (D) Lounge crew service; (E) Food quality; (F) Car mechanical condition; (G) Car cleanliness and housekeeping; (H) Condition of track & roadbed; (I) Desirability of train's schedule; (J) Condition of stations: (K) Appropriateness of type of equipment used.

Use the 9-point rating scale below. Do not use previous rating forms, as we have changed some of the categories. Put ratings on separate sheet from other correspondence.

1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9

Extremely poor — Average, acceptable — Extremely good

RTN'S TRAIN RATING FORM

NAME & ADDRESS:
.....
.....
.....

Can we use your name? _____

TRAIN NAME & NUMBER	DATE RIDDEN	A Overall	B Operating Crew	C Dining Crew	D Lounge Crew	E Food Quality	F Car Condition (mechanical)	G Car Cleanliness	H Track Condition	I Scheduling	J Station Condition	K Type of Cars (appropriate?)	COMMENT SYMBOL*
													1
													2
													3
													4
													5
													6
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	

*COMMENTS: To add comments, copy circled number on separate sheet, write train name after it, followed by your comments.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709